

## COMMITTEE ON LANDS AND BUILDINGS

**May 30, 2002**

**4:15 PM**

Chairman Thibault called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Thibault, Gatsas, DeVries, Garrity

Absent: Alderman Pinard

Messrs: R. MacKenzie, R. Sherman, F. Rusczyk, B. Vigneault, S. Dafoe,  
J. Brisbin

Chairman Thibault addressed Item 3 of the agenda:

Communication from Robert MacKenzie, Planning Director regarding  
alternatives for the Carol M. Rines Center.

Mr. MacKenzie stated I don't have much additional information other than two items. One you should have received from Clerk. It was requested by Alderman Gatsas and it was a letter response by the staff.

Alderman DeVries asked was that sent out today.

Mr. MacKenzie answered I believe it was sent out yesterday. Do you know, Matt?

Deputy Clerk Normand replied I am not sure.

Chairman Thibault asked do you mean the plans for the Rines Center.

Mr. MacKenzie answered yes. It was related to the alternatives.

Alderman DeVries stated I haven't seen that.

Mr. MacKenzie stated I also know and I received a copy of a financial analysis and Randy Sherman I know is here to discuss that. One of the Alderman did ask for information on perhaps putting the senior center, the Health Department and Information Systems into the building. I know in discussions with him later he was just looking primarily for the Health Department and the senior center. In general, the three departments would not fit – the Health Department, senior center and Information Systems. The total net leasable area of the building is 29,000

square feet. Both the Health Department and senior center would need in total about 33,000 square feet and that would not include Information Systems. It would be likely too tight for both the Health Department and the senior center to go together. We could always look at ways of trimming but in general I am hesitant to go into a building initially that is too tight without any room for expansion and already cutting down a program. So, Health and the senior center would total about 33,000 square feet while there is only 29,000 net usable area available. That is the only new information that I have available.

Chairman Thibault asked how many square feet again.

Mr. MacKenzie answered the net useable square footage is 29,000. The building itself in total including mechanical rooms and boiler rooms is about 32,000.

Alderman DeVries stated I am looking to see if there is an common space there that might be utilized by both departments. I do know that you have some clinics and I am wondering if they may be after hours or weekends thus making use of common space.

Mr. Rusczek replied I have not seen a plan so I don't know if there is any compatible space. The Health Department currently runs evening clinics and activities four nights per week. On two of the nights we run STD/HIV clinics and the other two nights we run off of our mobile van so that is always coming and going into our clinical space.

Alderman DeVries asked so your evening clinics start at what time.

Mr. Rusczek answered they actually start at 3 PM and typically go until 8 PM or 9 PM depending on the load.

Alderman DeVries asked and the use of space that they would need to be held in...does it need to be dedicated to just that use or is it plausible that if the hours somehow coincided that you could share the space.

Mr. Rusczek answered clinic space is clinic space that is set-up as a medical facility. Generally we try to protect it from any of us even in the Health Department utilizing the space for anything but a clinic. The nature of our business is that we are dealing with communicable diseases and the need to run sanitary, pure operations is very important to us.

Alderman Gatsas asked, Mr. MacKenzie, have you done a schematic like you showed us on an overhead the first time that showed the nice layouts that could go into the Rines Center.

Mr. MacKenzie replied the only layouts we did were the ones that we showed that night. We looked at the square footages to see if they would fit and they would not fit.

Alderman Gatsas asked how many square feet on the first floor at the Rines Center.

Mr. MacKenzie answered the main level, which is actually a lower level on one part is the largest floor and that floor is roughly 21,000 square feet.

Alderman Gatsas asked and what do you have on the next level or the backside level.

Mr. MacKenzie answered then you get to what is actually the Elm Street level and that is roughly 4,700 square feet. The top level that we are looking at for archives was roughly 3,200 square feet.

Alderman Gatsas asked how many square feet does the Health Department have right now.

Mr. Rusczek answered all together...again trying to compare apples to apples we don't include in our space common space, toilet space or meeting rooms that are in the building. All together we have just under 10,000 square feet now.

Chairman Thibault stated Fred that is what you have now but what do you need.

Mr. Rusczek replied right and again that doesn't include our big meeting space or the fact that when we hold a lot of meetings we go to the Verizon building across the street. We do a lot there. We go and meet off site. We have people stacked on top of people. When we have looked at moving to other locations...for example three years ago, whenever we looked at leasing the fit-up costs were such that we would be looking at \$350,000 to \$400,000. So, when deciding do you move into space that is maybe larger and meets your current needs or do you stick it out until we figure out whether or not we are going to have City owned space, we have always said well we can't spend that sort of money and can't justify that sort of expenditure so we are in an undersized space now. If you look at the square footage that we have for say our Environmental Health staff, each of them are in a cubicle that is 6' x 6' or 36 square feet. They don't fit in there but we are doing the best we can because if you recall three years ago we were going to be moving to the Police Department.

Chairman Thibault stated I guess, Fred, what I am looking for is what do you need.

Mr. Rusczek replied the architect went through a space study that was done by Tom Wallace a few years ago. We took that space study and added to it the additional space that we will need to do some new things, to be prepared for a drop shipment of vaccine, to have a little better protection in our clinic space between possibly contaminated stuff, to have a little better medical facility for a physician that the Federal government will be paying for and some additional staff. What you see on the plan was based on Architect Matuszewski's interpretation of what we need now and he based a lot of that on an earlier study. The two are compatible. There is nothing that they found that we didn't need and he didn't expand anything.

Chairman Thibault stated I am looking for square footage. What do you need? Mr. Rusczek replied I think the number comes out to about 18,000 square feet or so.

Alderman Garrity stated the Welfare Department, Health Department and Youth Services, that is their total rent that we are paying currently.

Mr. MacKenzie replied I believe Randy has the exact numbers. I believe it is on the order of \$170,000 as to today.

Alderman Garrity asked that is for all three departments yearly.

Mr. MacKenzie answered that is a yearly number, yes.

Alderman Gatsas asked, Randy, can you give me the exact numbers please.

Mr. Sherman answered Welfare is \$37,500 and OYS is \$17,500.

Alderman Gatsas asked so that is a total of \$55,000.

Mr. Sherman answered yes.

Chairman Thibault asked what about Health.

Mr. Rusczek answered our lease is \$78,200. I have to caution that we are paying a very low lease because of the conditions being what they are.

Alderman Gatsas stated so Welfare and Youth Services is \$55,000. I guess, Mr. Rusczek if I said to you 18,000 square feet but could you live with 25,000 square feet...wouldn't that be more compatible for you?

Mr. Rusczek replied well we could fill that up. Keep in mind this isn't what was done. What was done was designed to meet our needs.

Alderman Gatsas asked but if I said 30,000 square feet you probably could fill that up too instead of having cubicles that...

Mr. Rusczek answered that might be tough. We might have to start parking vehicles inside perhaps.

Alderman Gatsas stated well let's talk realistic and say could you live with 15,000 square feet seeing that is a 50% increase from where you are in space now.

Mr. Rusczek replied what we have found is often times you can't look at space and say it is 15,000 or 18,000 unless you start from something that is wide open. When we look at the 18,000 square feet that is projected, there are problems within that space in terms of offices that are smaller and some things. I think that the space, the 18,000, is appropriate for our current needs and I think it will meet our needs projecting out for five or six years.

Alderman Gatsas asked what is the cost for renovation of that space to get it retrofitted to what you need. Does anybody have that number yet?

Mr. MacKenzie answered yes I believe it is in the package. I believe it is on the order of...this is a total fit-up with new interior walls and I think it was \$500,000.

Alderman DeVries asked is that Option 1, the \$559,000.

Mr. MacKenzie answered yes. The \$559,000 was for a full renovation and fit-up.

Alderman Gatsas asked so basically you have not even attempted, as a department, to put Health and the Elderly in that space. You have not even made an attempt to see what it looks like?

Mr. MacKenzie answered given the square footage that we were off, no.

Alderman Gatsas replied when you say given the square footage you were off you are assuming they need 18,000 and you are saying the seniors need 15,000. If the seniors could live with 12,000 and Health could live with 15,000 that would give you 27,000. We are in a financial crisis here in the City and I don't see anybody

looking to move in any direction so that we can reduce some costs. If that is the case, then let's do it all and tell the taxpayers we are charging whatever we want and it doesn't matter. I think we need to look at some things here that are beneficial. Now, I am looking at a cost that...maybe the Rines Center should just be for the seniors and we should find another 8,000 square feet for the Health Department because that certainly is not going to cost us \$2.5 million. Maybe that is the most appropriate move.

Mr. MacKenzie responded again that is more of a policy issue for the Board to look at realistically. I would say that it is not in the best interest of the City to keep renting. Generally, any municipality renting for more than two years in emergency situations is going to spend additional money to rent. I would encourage the City to provide a municipal building or buildings to house these operations.

Alderman Gatsas asked, Randy, what is the total cost for constructing the senior center on the West Side and rehabbing whatever we have and demolition of the buildings that we are taking down and loss of revenue because that all has to be figured into one picture of what that cost is going to be.

Mr. Sherman answered the number that I used was \$2.9 million.

Alderman Gatsas asked is the \$2.9 million for new construction, retrofit.... is that demolition of the site.

Mr. Sherman replied my understanding is that would get the site ready and the building built.

Alderman Gatsas asked what is the cost for financing \$2.9 million.

Mr. Sherman asked with all of the interest thrown on top.

Alderman Gatsas replied I need it on a yearly basis.

Mr. Sherman responded it starts at about \$272,000 and goes down from there.

Alderman Gatsas stated so it is \$272,000 a year. Can you give me what the loss of revenue is from the tax base on those three properties?

Mr. Sherman replied the valuation is estimated at about \$500,000 so it is only about \$12,500 a year.

Alderman Gatsas asked the retrofit for the library that is there is what.

Mr. Sherman answered it is \$600,000 so that is about \$56,000 a year.

Alderman Gatsas stated so that is \$340,000 per year. Now give me that same scenario with the Rines Center. The cost for acquisition. Is it \$2.7 million?

Mr. Sherman replied I have \$2,750,000 and that includes the fit-up.

Alderman Gatsas asked and that is fit-up for the Health...how much is the total fit-up for that.

Mr. Sherman answered under the Health scenario it is \$559,000 and under the Elderly scenario it is \$445,000.

Alderman Gatsas asked and the cost for the \$2.750 million per year is about \$265,000.

Mr. Sherman answered yes.

Alderman Lopez asked what are you reading from, Randy.

Mr. Sherman answered I have the back-up to the summary sheet.

Alderman Lopez stated well we don't have that.

Mr. Sherman replied no I just sent you the summary sheet. I certainly can make copies of all of the back-up detail to all of those numbers.

Alderman Gatsas asked so for us to do a senior center on the West Side and convert the space at the Rines Center is a total of \$605,000 a year. Is that correct?

Mr. Sherman answered yes you would be in that area. In Year 1 you still have some lease payments that you have to run through. My numbers include operating costs, but yes \$600,000 is probably about right because of capital items.

Alderman Gatsas asked and basically what we have done is we have moved Welfare, Youth Services and Health to the Rines Center and we have moved the seniors to the West Side.

Mr. Sherman answered correct.

Alderman Gatsas stated so that is \$605,000 a year.

Mr. Sherman replied that is right.

Alderman Gatsas asked if we left Welfare, if we left Youth Services and if we told Mr. Rusczek to double his space to \$150,000 a year in space that we would be paying, our cost for the total project or both renovations would be about \$460,000. If the Rines Center...if the seniors were strictly in the Rines Center by themselves stand-alone.

Mr. Sherman asked if the seniors are in the Rines Center or...

Alderman Gatsas interjected if the seniors took the Rines Center alone that is \$265,000 per year because that is what you gave me for \$2.7 million.

Mr. Sherman replied that is right. We are going to assume that the fit-up is the same.

Alderman Gatsas asked and then I take the \$55,000 for Youth Services and Welfare and double Mr. Rusczek's space to \$150,000...if I take the \$150,000, let's say it is \$145,000 and the \$55,000 is \$200,000 and if I add the \$200,000 to the \$265,000 I get a total of \$465,000 for all space, which is less expensive. Is that correct?

Mr. Sherman answered that is correct but you didn't do the library. So the library is in one and not in the other. You could actually take that out of the first one. You don't have to do that.

Alderman Gatsas replied correct. I am just looking at what we are doing for placement.

Mr. Sherman responded you are right but then the difference is what Bob talked about. As you go out, your lease payments increase and your debt decreases and it is about Year 5 that they cross.

Alderman Gatsas replied I understand. Let me just go to my next scenario. So that is a total of \$465,000. The last scenario I would have is if we could make...to do the Rines Center for the Health Department and only the seniors then our cost for the entire project would be somewhere around \$410,000. It would be the \$55,000 that we would be paying for Welfare and Youth Services and the \$265,000 at the Rines Center. If I add the \$55,000 and the \$265,000 together I get \$320,000. Is that correct?

Mr. Sherman responded that is correct.



Alderman Gatsas asked so we would just about reduce the debt for the City by \$320,000 if we could get the seniors and the Health Department in the Rines Center.

Mr. Sherman answered that is right. If you don't build a stand alone building on the West Side as proposed you are eliminating that debt and now you are still paying lease payments for the two smaller departments, OYS and Welfare.

Alderman Gatsas stated correct so if we wanted to cut it in half and Mr. Rusczek getting new space could he make with 15,000 square feet and could the seniors make with 14,000 square feet. They probably could. I certainly don't have a problem understanding that but I think we all have to be realistic. If somebody wanted to say that if we build a 15,000 square foot free standing building on the West Side for seniors that we are going to get 200 seniors a day to go to it, I can tell you that we will have a nightmare because there are only 55 parking spaces there. So, we are going to have that problem. I think to say that is unrealistic because it is not like they can find an awful lot of off street parking. Now if at the Rines Center they get 200 people a day, there is certainly enough parking in that vicinity...there is a parking lot adjacent that the City could lease if they wanted to because they needed the space but to reduce the cost by 50% I would think that the Health Department and the senior center could physically work in that building if that is all the space that we had and giving each of them new space certainly would make sense.

Chairman Thibault asked what about these other departments now that need things such as the Library and what is the other department we are talking about.

Mr. MacKenzie answered there were three others that we were talking about. The training center, the archives and the West Side Library. We did talk about...

Chairman Thibault interjected what would be the cost of that and where do we put them.

Alderman Gatsas stated I just did that, Alderman. Welfare and Youth Services is \$55,000 a year where they are at. So anytime you are looking to change that what you are looking to do is take those two units along with archives and what you are saying is I need to spend \$300,000 a year for those three departments. That is the equivalent because that is the cost. The West Side Library can be done for \$56,000 I think you said, Randy. Is that the debt service on the West Side Library?

Mr. Sherman replied yes that is right.

Alderman DeVries stated why don't we start by graphing that out and seeing if in any way it is compatible to the two departments being in there – Health and seniors and see if the space works before we...is that something that you could complete for us, Mr. MacKenzie and work with those two departments and see...

Mr. MacKenzie interjected we would have to engage the services of Fred Matuszewski again. I would not want to promise you that it would work. The Board has generally given me the charge in the past to do a project right rather than doing it at a level that is just not going to work out and five years down the line would have to be redone. Based upon Fred Matuszewski's review earlier, all of the space shown in his earlier sketch would be needed for current operations with just a little bit of room for expansion. If you do start cutting that down, realistically you may not have that room for expansion but again it is the Board's choice. We can go back and lay it out but I am not sure if I would recommend it to you because again five years down the line if we need something else and it doesn't fit I don't think that is good long range planning for the City.

Chairman Thibault asked, Bob, what would be the cost for Mr. Matuszewski.

Mr. MacKenzie answered I think we could do that for just a couple of thousand dollars. We could get him to look at programs would be cut.

Alderman Gatsas asked how many square feet does the existing senior center have on the West Side now.

Mr. MacKenzie answered I would defer to Barbara.

Ms. Vigneault stated about 3,800 and it is 5,196 on the East.

Alderman Gatsas asked how many people go to the East Side Center on a daily basis.

Ms. Vigneault answered about 25.

Alderman Gatsas asked and how many people on a daily basis go to the West Side Center.

Ms. Vigneault answered some days as many as 75 or 80.

Alderman Gatsas asked is that the bingo day, Wednesday.

Ms. Vigneault answered no that is an average.

Alderman Gatsas stated so that is 125 people. Would you say that if we built a 15,000 square foot free standing building...how many people a day would you expect there?

Ms. Vigneault replied if you are building a building you are also probably going to get more people to show up.

Alderman Gatsas stated I would hope you would. I would hope we are not building a \$3 million project for 100 people.

Ms. Vigneault replied the National Committee on Aging has some standards about how many people a day and how big this building should be. They calculate that if you have about 385 a day you need a 24,000 square foot building. That will give you an idea in comparison to what we are serving now and what we may serve in the future.

Alderman Gatsas stated so 12,000 square feet should recognize somewhere in the vicinity of about 190 people. Now 190 people a day, if you had that on the West Side with 55 parking spaces what do you think the problem would be? Do you think there would be a problem?

Ms. Vigneault replied parking is always a problem. We now that translates into a lot of different projects. Parking is a real concern. We need to be able to handle that and it has to be on a public bus transportation route. I have looked at the parking at the Rines Center and the plans for the West Side Center and if the seniors go into a building with the Health Department we have to calculate how many spaces the Health Department would need for parking as well.

Alderman Gatsas asked did you calculate that on the West Side with how many people are in the Library.

Ms. Vigneault answered we have a parking nightmare there now and we have 33 spaces and we are triple parked.

Alderman Gatsas stated so 55 parking spaces is really not going to enhance your situation.

Ms. Vigneault replied it would help it a little bit but parking is a problem everywhere. When we looked at the places where the senior center should go, we looked at a two-mile radius around where the population parts of town were for the seniors. We looked at a radius of downtown and both sites are in that radius. They are both in excellent positions for access. My concern is not just accessibility but convenience as well because it needs to be more than accessible;

it needs to be convenient. If you are expecting people to go all the time, you need to have it convenient for folks so that they will be enticed to go more than occasionally.

Alderman Gatsas asked are you saying that neither one of them is convenient.

Ms. Vigneault answered no. I am saying that both sites have that positive, that they are convenient.

Alderman Gatsas stated but the Rines Center, obviously you have noticed if you have driven around that, to the south of the building and I think the next street going down in Langdon Street and there is another parking lot there.

Ms. Vigneault asked underneath.

Alderman Gatsas replied no there is whole parking lot off to the left of it to the south of Langdon Street. If you drive around it there is a lot of off street parking, more so than what you would find at the West Side. The West Side obviously by 8 AM because of the students every side parking space must be filled. I think that the inconvenience that you would find is certainly not going to be beneficial to the seniors or at least you don't have a high school sitting on the Rines Center that is going to take up some of that space and we are reducing the cost by some 50%. Now I would say to you that if the Rines Center...if it is 10,000 square feet for the seniors and all of the sudden you have 150 people a day and there needs to be an expansion, I would tell you that I have to believe the Board is going to move because looking at 125 I would hope that it is going to draw at least another 100 people a day for the investment that we are putting it. If we are just making a \$3 million investment for 125 people we shouldn't be doing it.

Ms. Vigneault responded exactly and that is why we have to make sure that the fit-up is appropriate for attracting people to come to the site.

Alderman Lopez stated unfortunately we don't have all of the numbers that Randy has and whether they are correct and I assume they are correct...I think the study that cost \$35,000 that the Committee and the individual put on for the senior center established a lot of statistical data and bore out the facts that a single senior citizen center was to be had in Manchester. After looking at all of the sites and the history of the Sears building and what have you that has been going around for three years now, the thing that I think and I would like to press upon the Aldermen is sometimes business is not the best way to go in this City. We are not in the business in this City. I said it and I will say it once again. We have people...we provide a service. People pay tax dollars for a service. If we were to have a business we would not put millions of dollars or \$2.6 million into Livingston Pool

and get nothing out of it. We would not put thousands and thousands of dollars in our last CIP budget to take care of some of these problems. This plan that Mr. MacKenzie has come up with is commendable. He has worked very hard. That should not be a reason to vote for it, but the Committee had all of the information that Alderman Gatsas and Alderman Thibault and I had. We have been going over this for the last two years. Putting the seniors in the Rines Center is not in the best interest of the seniors. It is not in the best interest of the City of Manchester. We have a problem with the Health Department, Welfare, Youth Services and others who can use that building and use it instead of paying rent. The Welfare Department only has a six-month lease. Paul Martineau has been able to talk them into six months. After that, that \$55,000 is going to go up.

Alderman Gatsas responded that is not true, Alderman. We were told that if they entered into a long-term lease the rent would be less.

Alderman Lopez replied then we better check the lease because that is what I was told. Anyway, let's say that you are right. The plan if you read it in the proposal and I am sure you have and the presentation by the Planning Director, he has put so much effort in to try to get a consensus among us to really do something for all of these departments and put housing at the Brown School and get rid of it. So, we are talking about how much we are tearing down and what kind of apartments we are putting up and getting more tax dollars...you know we can make numbers any way we want to make them. That does not solve the problem and we can create more problems. The Health Department...Fred how many people do you have visiting that place every day?

Mr. Ruscsek responded we have about 35 staff who are housed there. The other 35 are in the schools. We have about 150 to 200 visitors a day. More importantly, the Health Department serves as a home base for many field activities. Right now, our vans are stored down at MTA so there are inefficiencies in driving to MTA, getting a van, driving it back to the Health Department, loading it up with supplies and then repeating that process. The other thing is that our world is changing. In about three weeks we will have completed 20 years in temporary space. It has a large number of deficiencies that I would be happy to share with the Aldermen. I did print it up. Our world is changing. We are being asked to be prepared to be more of a public health department as we see across the country and less like something that is on the third and fourth floor in crammed in space. We need to have facilities where we can protect samples that we might collect for bio-terrorism and samples that we might collect for an outbreak. In our world today we can be anywhere in the world in 24 hours. That means anybody can be here in 24 hours. We watch regularly the outbreaks that occur across the country and across the world because that is what we have to be prepared to handle. It is hard for us as Americans to believe that someone would intentionally infect themselves

with Small Pox, the Ebola Virus or something else and go into a community yet they are willing to. We do accept that in many countries people put a bomb on themselves and go blow themselves up. We are being told that these are real threats and we expect public health to establish the first line of defense to be prepared to handle that sort of stuff. Our activities, by the way, have always been seven days a week, 24 hours a day. You can check with our State Epidemiologist, the hospitals or the Fire Department. We do get called out. It is pretty hard to do that out of the facility we are in but when the opportunities came up for us to move we always chose the option of staying because it was the most cost efficient for the community at the time. We did that over and over and over again so we have always been cognizant of the needs of the City and we never could bring ourselves to justify a large fit-up expense for a lease of 3-5 years. When you are looking at the fit-up expense for plumbing and to set-up an operation it becomes cost prohibitive for a lease arrangement. All of that being said, for us this is our opportunity to get the permanent quarters. Our opportunity where we can work professionally and do what we need to do for the community. We can be very successful at saving the community money by going out and getting funding from the outside to support our programs but it is getting harder and harder. A lot of those funds require that we be ADA compliant. We are not.

Alderman Gatsas stated I don't think anybody has told you, Fred, to not do your job and not to do it at the best of your ability and not to do it with new quarters. My question to you was can you do it with less than 18,000 square feet. Now retrofitting you to a new space in a new building...I think that the seniors obviously refused to look at the Rines Center because they were frightened by the thought of having Youth Services with them because the very thing that I understood for two years was that the last people they want to be joining a building with was Youth Services but to discourage them from the Rines Center, the conception that we put in was with Youth Services. Never once would I ever believe that that should happen. The seniors saw it and they were frightened because they didn't want to share a building with Youth Services. I think that to put fear into them to make another project sound better when we are looking at space where we have a problem with parking. Correct me if I am wrong, Randy, but I am looking at two scenarios. One scenario that would cost us \$320,000 to move Health and the seniors into the Rines building and keep Welfare and Youth Services in the leased space that they have. The cost of that would be \$320,000.

Mr. Sherman replied that is right.

Alderman Gatsas stated the next scenario we have is to put the seniors only in the Rines Center by themselves and double the square footage for Health at \$145,000 with the \$150,000 for Youth and Welfare and that would be a cost of \$460,000.

Mr. Sherman replied that is correct.

Alderman Gatsas stated and the ultimate is to build a free standing building on the West Side for the seniors, put Health, Welfare and Youth Services into the Rines Center and that cost would be \$605,000.

Mr. Sherman responded correct.

Alderman DeVries stated I understand what you are saying, Alderman Gatsas about the numbers. What disturbs me is the way the square footage on the floors of the Rines Center unfold it appears to me that for this scenario to work the main floor, which is the lower level, will need to be shared by the two facilities and I don't think that has been addressed as to whether that is even feasible. I don't know how we can even go too much further with this discussion without even knowing if it is feasible for these two services to share space and still have the needs of both departments met.

Alderman Gatsas stated you are going to scare them if you say shared because they are going to think that we are going to be walking through their space. I think that a petition...you are saying just separate.

Alderman DeVries replied petition or separated. There is one elevator. That is why I say to me and maybe it is something that Mr. MacKenzie's staff could quickly address and just tell us if there is any way it is feasible with the limitation of the building – one elevator, sets of stairwells, etc. I see some questions. The numbers obviously are intriguing, especially looking at our budget scenario this year. It deserves a good hard look but if it is not feasible for us to do this, how long do we look?

Alderman Lopez asked would Alderman DeVries explain what she means about the budget and all of that. In reference to what?

Alderman DeVries answered what I am saying is the budget discussions that we have had over the course of the last few weeks have led me to believe that many Aldermen are entertaining budget cuts and City services are being depleted from a level that they are currently at today. We have talked about across the Board cuts to make potential tax increases palatable to our taxpayers. So, what I am saying is that in light of the potential decreased services that we are looking at, saving \$2 million on the West Side Center certainly...I would have a hard time going back to my constituents and saying we have slashed City services but you are still going to get a 6% or 8% or whatever the tax increase is going to be and oh by the way next week we are spending \$2 million on a senior center. It is going to be hard.

Alderman Lopez asked so you believe that cutting the \$2 million is going to save \$.38 on the tax roles.

Alderman DeVries answered that is not what I am saying. I am just saying it makes me want to take a good hard look at this scenario to see if it is at all feasible for us to look at these two services sharing this one facility. If it is not feasible, I don't want to waste a whole lot of time on it. That is why I start with you have to look at the floor plan and see if these two departments can even fit within the one facility.

Alderman Lopez stated maybe Randy or Kevin you can explain about bonding a little bit better where people really think that this is going to increase the taxes for our budget. I don't believe it is. The philosophy that we are talking about and what needs to be done in order to accommodate four projects once again...to worry about square footage, the Planning Department, we pay these people...I don't know off the top of my head how much money we pay them to go out and do these things and sometimes I think we get into too much micromanagement with all due respect. They have spent hours and days and money coming to a conclusion here and I wish you would take that into consideration. It is not where we want to set this bottle of water; it is where the Health Department and other people can work out of. He didn't do this just in the fly of the night. I really wish that the Committee would take a good look at that and not get into the micromanagement of what is going on.

Alderman Garrity asked, Bob, what is the turnaround time to get some plans for the feasibility of the seniors and the Health Department being in the Rines Center.

Mr. MacKenzie answered I think we can probably do that in two weeks. I am not sure if we would want to do it internally with staff given some of the more detailed architectural issues particularly of the Health Department. We would probably want to retain Fred Matuszewski again just to make sure that we didn't make any mistakes. I would guess two weeks.

Alderman Garrity stated and that brings us past the FY03 budget right. This is already funded in the CIP right? The senior center on the West Side?

Mr. MacKenzie replied the senior center and the Rines Center are...actually the senior center is in the FY03 budget and the Board expedited the Rines Center to the FY02 budget so the Board has acted upon that although there is one final action, I believe, for the expedited bonds. So, the Board has I believe until next week to take a final action on the expedited projects. I did want to just review with this Committee...there has been a lot discussed here tonight. There have been a lot of new ideas but I do want to set the record straight because there has



been phraseology such as here is a cheaper plan to look at. I cannot state at this point that the proposal offered would be cheaper in the long run. As I understand it, you would be including the Health Department and the senior center at the Rines Center and you would apparently be taking care of the West Side Library at the existing West Side Community Center, which would have to be rehabbed and then you would have to find rental space or existing space for the Welfare Department, OYS, archives and a training room. Again, the problem I see with that plan is that first of all you will be renting long-term and again I reiterate that if any community is renting for more than two years it is not cost effective and it is not in the best interest of the community. So, I can also not say over a 25-year period that that would be cheaper than the proposed alternative. So, I don't want any misrepresentation that maybe that is by far the cheapest plan. I would want to do a financial analysis with the Finance Department but it is still likely that it would be more expensive. The second point, though, is that in essence you would be cramming together departments that do not necessary have affinities together. One of the most important things as you look at efficiencies of departments, interaction of the departments, which departments should be working together, which clientele normally go from one agency to another, and convenience of the clientele. I think if you look at the convenience to clientele and the programmatic efficiencies, that placing the Health Department, OYS and Welfare together is programmatically a good unit. Putting a new stand-alone senior center beside the West Side Library is also a good programmatic element. In terms of efficiencies and programmatic operation, the plan proposed, I think, is far better than the one being discussed now. I do want to talk again about the issue of physically will they fit. Yes, you can cram in anything but again the Board in the past has challenged me to do the right thing and look down the road. We are only going to get to do this once and if you physically put them in together and they don't really fit and five years down the line they are saying we don't fit and we need to expand or we have to move, that does not look good for the City. Based upon those three elements I can't say right off the bat that that is a good idea to look at that alternative. Again, I only heard about it tonight but you would have to be cautious if you follow that path in my opinion.

Alderman Gatsas asked, Bob, a building with 19,000 square feet, what would you propose if the City...if somebody came to the City with a 19,000 square foot building what do you think the per square foot parking regulation would be. I know it depends on what is going there. Let's just assume it is a meeting facility.

Mr. MacKenzie answered if it was office space it would be on the order of two spaces per 1,000 square feet required, which would be roughly 40 spaces.

Alderman Gatsas asked and if it were other than that.

Mr. MacKenzie answered retail would be the maximum. Typically on a multi-story building you would only have retail on the first floor. It would go up to five spaces per 1,000 if it was retail on the first floor.

Alderman Gatsas asked so that would be roughly 100 spaces.

Mr. MacKenzie answered if the entire building was...yes.

Alderman Gatsas asked so do you think that the 55 spaces that are at the West Side Center is convenient parking for the seniors and the Library.

Mr. MacKenzie answered I believe that at most times of the day because when they talk about people using the facility they don't all arrive at once and stay for two hours and leave. They use the facility throughout the day so people are coming and going. In that particular part of the West Side there is also a large parking lot adjacent to it, St. Andrew's Church, which potentially you could work out agreements on joint use.

Alderman Gatsas asked when you say large that is about 22 spaces.

Mr. MacKenzie answered I believe it is more than that but we could check and get you that number. I have been in that parking lot before and have used that parking lot. During most of the periods you may have difficulty during a peak time when everybody is going to go on a trip to the Seacoast and everybody arrives at once but people don't always...seniors don't always come one person per car. You see a lot of carpooling. You see more drop-offs. You see transit usage and shuttle buses. So, it is a little bit different usage than in an office building where you have more one occupancy vehicles using the operation.

Alderman Gatsas asked what would you hope for if we were building a 15,000 square foot facility. What would you hope for as a utilization of that facility on a daily basis by seniors?

Mr. MacKenzie answered I would defer to Barbara Vigneault on that. She has looked at the national standards and again she is more familiar with it than I am.

Alderman Gatsas asked so if I told you that based on her standards if we are doing what we are doing there should be about 190 people per day. If I told you there was 190 people per day going there what would we have for a parking problem?

Mr. MacKenzie answered again we would probably want to do studies as to what time of day do they come. You will have seniors come in the morning to do certain items and then they leave. So it is like a movie theatre. Movie theatre

people have typically two and a half to three people per car and they don't always come. You would say a movie theatre operates six different shifts but you could never design a parking lot to fit all of these six different shifts so you would have to look at the utilization. People don't come to stay the entire day at a senior center. They come for certain activities so implying that you need 190 spaces does not make sense.

Alderman Garrity asked, Bob, the top level that is 3,200 square feet you said.

Mr. MacKenzie answered yes.

Alderman Garrity asked we don't plan on putting Health or Welfare up there even if we combine both departments so you are just going to keep it archives aren't you.

Mr. MacKenzie answered it is unfinished space. Again, you would have to do a lot of work if you were going to put either the senior center up there...

Alderman Garrity interjected no I don't want to put the senior center up there or Health up there but you stated that...

Mr. MacKenzie interjected if you excluded that you would have roughly 26,000 square feet available for the two departments if you wanted them on two levels.

Alderman Garrity stated and you mentioned the training room. I think a training room is a good idea but we are in a budget crunch and if we don't get our training room this year then we don't get our training room.

Alderman Smith asked, Bob, on your letter dated May 28 you stated "furthermore the Health Department would not fit in a senior center even if no other uses were proposed for that building." Do you still stand by that now given the things presented here tonight?

Mr. MacKenzie answered again I am typically charged with trying to do the job right and looking long-term. I would be very concerned and I don't know if I would represent to you that we should put both of those in there. We could go back to try and reduce each space, but again if we are investing that amount of money should we be cutting to the point where five years down the line it doesn't make sense to have them in there? I would be happy to go back if the Committee wants to look at it but at the present time I stand by that statement. I am not sure, particularly if we don't use the top floor, 26,000 feet whether that is a reasonable scenario.

Alderman Smith asked, Randy, in your letter your analysis showed the least expensive alternative would be to relocate the Health Department at the Rines Center along with OYS and Welfare and to pursue the stand alone construction for the South Main Street elderly center. Do you still stand by that?

Mr. Sherman answered I looked at four scenarios so out of the four that was the cheapest one but what I considered was Health, OYS and Welfare in the Rines Center and then I considered two alternatives from that – the stand alone and having the seniors continue to lease and then I looked at the senior center in the Rines Center with OYS and Welfare and then either building for the Health Department or leasing. Those are the four that I looked at. I didn't look at elderly and Health in the Rines Center together but out of the four that I looked at the West Side option was the cheapest of those four.

Alderman Smith stated I would just like to point out to the Committee that if you do more it to the West Side, the West Side Library will double their square footage so that is a gain there. I would just like to say that on the Elderly Services Commission they unanimously wanted the senior center to be built on the West Side and there was a follow-up letter as you well know from Barbara Vigneault stating that same situation. So, the presentations here tonight are very favorable to the West Side senior center.

Mr. MacKenzie stated I do apologize but I have to leave the meeting now.

Alderman DeVries asked is there any additional land that is developable with the Rines Center that is not currently tied up in parking spaces.

Mr. MacKenzie asked could you rephrase that question.

Alderman DeVries asked are there any additional properties where future construction could take place to expand the square footage of that facility without reducing all of the parking.

Mr. MacKenzie answered I am not sure if the rear portion of the building could go up in terms of the height. I don't think it was intended to. We would have to have a structural analysis to see if you could put the rear of the building up stories and whether you could actually have reasonable access to that. Physically, you could move out more out front where there is a little bit of green space. I am not sure how efficient that space would be. It is a tight site. I would never say that you couldn't change a building without a good structural analysis of the building.

Chairman Thibault stated before I ask the Committee to vote, there are a few things that I would like to say. Looking at what we are seeing in the world today

and things that have happened in the last year, I look at the Health Department playing a very important role not just in this City but throughout the country. As we have seen major crises happening throughout the country, many of these health departments have been caught off guard if you will by not being prepared. I appreciate what Fred just said a few moments ago regarding what all of the possibilities are and that we could put them in a space that is not exactly what he wants and needs and he can make it work. Well we can make anything work. I really believe that this Committee should look at the idea that we don't want the Health Department to go into a place at this time knowing what is happening in the world today and how fast it happens that we are going to be caught in a crisis some day and it will be because we failed to act properly. Looking at what Randy Sherman said about the best scenario that he has seen, I certainly am going to be supporting the West Side option. I know that it will cost us more money and I realize that but I am going to be supporting the West Side center because I feel that Welfare, Health and OYS need to go into the Rines Center. That is my opinion. The Committee can vote the way it likes and do what it wants.

Alderman Garrity asked, Barbara, were there any studies done for when the baby boom generation becomes senior citizens and how much participation is expected then.

Ms. Vigneault answered a lot. As you know, the elderly population is growing very rapidly. We are looking at 20,000 now in the City of Manchester and it is going to be increasing very quickly and very rapidly. One thing we have to note, too, is the fastest growing segment of that population is in the older population, those over 80, who will be in need of services. So, that is why it is so important to invest in that population.

Alderman Garrity stated I guess this is an editorial comment but there are still only 55 parking spaces over there.

Ms. Vigneault replied right.

Alderman Garrity asked what do we do in 15 years when the baby boom generation become senior citizens and we don't have parking for them over there. We can't tear down West High School.

Ms. Vigneault answered for the three years that we have been doing this we have been looking at many sites. We started with the Senior Center looking at 34 sites and narrowing it down and narrowing it down and narrowing it down and then we selected the two-mile radius and as I mentioned both of the sites are in that two-mile radius. Parking is very important and I have said that from the beginning because it is a vital part of access but so isn't public transportation. That needs to

be available to, which both sites have. The difference I think between the two and we had done some survey work in August of last year with some of the seniors in town and a majority of those people who replied, there were over 500 people who replied, wanted the West Side site. As you can tell, it is because we have a large participation on the West Side and that is where our success rate is so it kind of makes sense that that is where you should place your bets. So, you are making it convenient for the folks that go now and building a place where people can be drawn to in the future.

Alderman Gatsas asked the survey...what other ones did they have to choose from. They didn't have the Rines Center?

Ms. Vigneault answered I have a copy if you want to look at it. They didn't have the Rines Center. The survey was done before the Rines Center was available.

Alderman DeVries stated just because I am getting the indication from people on this Committee that they think that a vote is going to be forthcoming on this today to move in a direction, I just want to have the rest of the Committee understand my point of view. To anybody who has spoken to me I have made it clear that there are many needs that we have. We have to be sure that the Health Department will be able to facilitate for us. I think the Health Director has attempted to indicate that times are changing and his needs are changing and his facility needs to change around him. I have visited his current facility. It doesn't work and I don't want to see them left stranded at that facility for another year while we look for a better solution here. The Health Department has to be properly taken care of in whichever way we go forward with this decision. I will say again that it was definitely intriguing to take a look at a way to save the City some money and if we are committed to giving it a little bit more time to see if there is any feasibility to that look I would be willing to wait that out. I think it is very important that we look to the needs of our Health Department and make sure that they are properly outfitted for what could come down the pike.

Chairman Thibault stated we talk a lot about the West Side Library also and let me just tell you that in my experience and if I am wrong John Brisbin could jump in if he wants to but most of the library traffic happens after most of the seniors have left because you are looking at mostly school kids going to the library. John, when is the library most used?

Ms. Susan Dafoe stated I am the Branch Manager. We do have a lot of use after school but during the day we have pre-school door to learning, which is part of our role. That is something that we do have a very hard time fitting together.

Chairman Thibault asked how many cars would you say that entails in the parking lot.

Ms. Dafoe replied I would like to say that if we could have 12 spaces at any one time that would be great. We can work together but eventually when you are talking about the future if there was another building that could eventually be used as a parking lot...

Chairman Thibault interjected who knows what the future holds.

Mr. Brisbin stated the West Side does about 80,000 in circulation a year. That is about 1,500 per week or 300 or so per day and that is about 150 to 200 people.

Alderman Gatsas stated listening to my colleague next to me, I don't know if we...I think that it is imperative that we look to get the seniors in some new space. I think whether that space is 15,000 square feet or it is 10,000 square feet and hopefully they grow into that space because they are only in 3,800 now and let's not talk about the East Side Center because they may have 6,000 square feet over there but there are only 25 people a day going to it. I would hope that any space we would have, the seniors would have to come back to us and say there are 300 people a day going to this thing and we don't have enough space. I have a real problem thinking about building 15,000 square feet where there is not adequate parking because I think that is going to be an issue quicker than anything. If it is \$345,000 that we are looking to spend to move Welfare and Youth Services, we shouldn't be doing it for that reason because that is all we are accommodating. Not training rooms, not in the financial condition we are in. I would say, yes, can Health make it on 15,000 square feet? Probably. I don't think that is cramming anybody into any space. It is 3,000 square feet less and 5,000 square feet more than what you currently have. I don't think that the amount of square footage, if we have a tragedy in this City, if we gave them 50,000 square feet and said there is no tragedy, that would be wonderful but I don't think that whether he has 18,000 square feet or 15,000 square feet is going to hinder the ability to do the work at the Health Department. I would like to make a motion that this Committee recommend that we look at a consolidation of the Rines Center for the senior center and Health Department.

Alderman Garrity duly seconded the motion.

Chairman Thibault called for a vote. The motion failed with Alderman DeVries and Alderman Thibault being duly recorded in opposition.

Alderman DeVries stated I would like the feasibility study before I can vote in that direction.

Chairman Thibault stated we will ask for the feasibility study. I believe Planning will be doing this.

Alderman Gatsas stated I don't think we have the luxury of time. This is a budgeted item and it has to be on the floor and moved by June 11 and they told you it would be at least two weeks to get the feasibility study.

Deputy Clerk Johnson stated perhaps what you could do is ask Planning to report back by June 10, which would be the day before the final vote or the final deadline vote of the Board's current fiscal cycle that it is working on.

Chairman Thibault stated well Bob said it would take a couple of weeks.

Deputy Clerk Johnson replied I think he wanted to bring in the architect to look at things and I think that he may not be able to get as detailed as you might like. I don't know how much he can get from the architect that quickly but he could certainly try to get something back to you as soon as possible to look at.

Alderman Gatsas asked is there another motion.

Deputy Clerk Johnson answered my understanding is that the Committee's consensus is they are asking the Planning Director to come back with a report as soon as possible.

Alderman Gatsas replied I don't think that was a consensus, I think that was 2-2. Let's make a motion and see if you get the votes.

Alderman DeVries moved to have the Planning, Health and Elderly Services Departments report back at the earliest date so that a decision can be made for the budget. Alderman Garrity duly seconded the motion.

Chairman Thibault called for a vote. The motion carried with Alderman Gatsas and Alderman Pinard being duly recorded in opposition.

Alderman Gatsas asked does this have to go to the full Board.

Deputy Clerk Johnson answered the Committee can request the Planning Director to go back and look at another alternative and come back to the Committee without going to the Board.



Alderman Gatsas responded my question is this Committee, once the Planning Director comes back with a proposal, doesn't the full Board have to hear it before it gets to the next position.

Deputy Clerk Johnson replied before the final approval of anything...nothing can be done until the full Board acts. You are correct.

Alderman Gatsas stated we don't have another full Board meeting until after June 11. We have one on June 4 and not another one until after June 11.

Deputy Clerk Johnson replied you will have to have a special meeting in order to adopt your budget. You can take it up that same evening. That was my point.

There being no further business, on motion of Alderman Pinard, duly seconded by Alderman DeVries, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee